

## **MESTIZO HARTFORD: REFUGEE COMMUNITIES NEGOTIATING THE URBAN BORDERLANDS**

Janet Bauer, with Daniela Santangelo Akaratovic  
Trinity College, Hartford, CT

**Abstract.** Newer immigrants and refugees have historically transformed urban spaces occupied by previous generations of immigrants, as the Irish struggled to do in mid-19th century Hartford. Today, Kosovars, Bosnians, Cubans, Khmer, and Russians variously deploy their social networks, nostalgia, and traditional cultural capital in creating unique forms of cultural citizenship in this city. However, these most recent arrivals to Hartford are placed in an environment increasingly defined not by a middle class, white majority but by a racially diverse and largely multicultural (Latino-Black) minority. To adopt a "more interactive model of incorporation" (Zolberg) which draws attention to the increasing importance of "interaction among immigrant and native minority groups" (Kasinitz et al, 2002), we focus here on the 'borderlands' of ethnic interaction, particularly Muslim refugee-Latino interactions, in the metro Hartford neighborhoods where refugee families are initially resettled. This paper examines the different ways in which five recent refugee streams have confronted space/place dislocation in this multicultural urban context, while recognizing the impact of transnational connections and experiences--forged both back home and in places of prearrival sojourn (such as Germany, Thailand, and Israel).